

Town Meeting

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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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What Does Democracy Really Mean?

Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, Jr.

Speakers

DANTE GERMINO

JUDY KRUEGER

ROGER KVAM

IRVING YOSKOWITZ

GEORGE V. ALLEN

— **COMING** —

— **April 5, 1949** —

Is Modern Woman Failing Her Responsibilities?

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"What Does Democracy Really Mean?"

EIGHTH ANNUAL JUNIOR TOWN MEETING

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THE BROADCAST OF APRIL 5:

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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



MARCH 29, 1949

VOL. 14, No. 48

What Does Democracy Really Mean?

Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. The first question we are asked when we talk about the Town Meeting Round the World is, "Are you going to Moscow?" Ten days ago, we wrote to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, suggesting the possibility of originating a Town Meeting in Moscow. Yesterday, the Chairman of our Board of Trustees sent the following cable to Premier Josef Stalin:

"Celebrating its 15th year on the air, America's Town Meeting, supported by small contributions of the American people, is planning a round-the-world trip July and August to originate programs in 14 world capitals, each program to be transcribed and broadcast over 260 stations of the American Broadcasting Company, and, we hope, over similar facilities in each country where the program originates. Our party will include 20 representatives of leading American organizations in the field of labor, management, agriculture,

education, the arts and sciences, and a production staff of seven people. Town Meeting, itself, is to consist of two citizens of originating country and two American people. Have written Ambassador Panyushkin suggesting the possibility of including Moscow in our plans. In view of the recent meeting here attended by representative Russian intellectuals, we hope you will extend similar privilege to this American group for exchange of views toward the advancement of understanding between the peoples of the U. S. S. R. and the peoples of the United States of America.

"Signed, Peter Grimm, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, The Town Hall, Incorporated, New York."

As soon as we receive a reply we will let you, the people, know. (Applause.)

Now, in thousands of letters we receive from our listeners each year, tonight's question variously stated runs through most of them:

"What Does Democracy Really Mean?"

You all have your own ideas about it, but you probably haven't attempted to sit down and write them out, so tonight we think you'll be interested in the views of four young high school students selected in a nation-wide talent search conducted jointly by the high school magazine, *Our Times*, and Town Hall.

And as our special guest we'll hear from the Assistant Secretary of State, whose task it is to interpret America's democracy to the rest of the world through the "Voice of America" and other channels.

This is our annual Junior Town Meeting in which we salute more than 5,000 members of the Junior Town Meeting League, students, teachers, and station managers, who are using the Town Meeting method to teach young people how to deal with ideas and controversial questions.

"What Does Democracy Really Mean?" This in itself is a major controversial issue, since all of us have so many different ideas about it.

In this nation-wide talent search for participants in tonight's discussion, the New York City school system is our host. Representing New York City tonight is Irving Yoskowitz, who stands first in a class of 316 highly selected students of one of New York's finest schools—the High School of Science in the Bronx. He has par-

ticipated actively in extra-curricular activities with special attention to the school forum of which he is president. Irving Yoskowitz, who does democracy really mean? Irving. (Applause.)

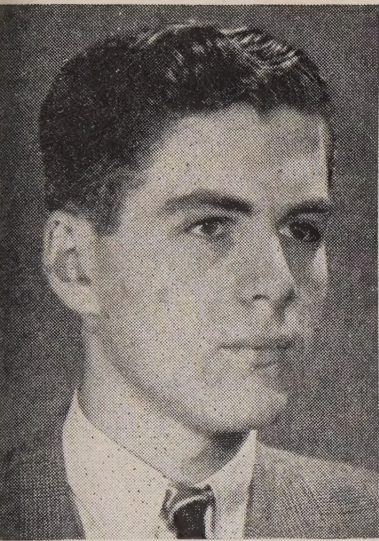
Irving Yoskowitz:

It is my belief, Mr. Denny, that perfection isn't within the grasp of humans. In fact, it's continuous just beyond us. I believe my classmate, Judy Krueger, thinks that we must try to touch perfection. But civilization runs forward, shifting, dynamic, always reaching for complete excellence and never attaining it. Yet human society imposes upon itself governments calling themselves permanent and constant.

Of course, governments are necessary. But static governments, those which claim perfection in a dynamic society, as ours is, are the brakes of reaction applied to a running train. They will lower speed. They may stop it altogether. But when the train insists upon moving, when the train, by the will of its passengers—the people—insists upon progressing, the brakes are cracked, broken. In human affairs, we call this a revolution.

The function of a government, then, is the maintenance of order and progress; the keeping within the bounds of decency and humanity in a tumbling, rushing society. If this is the duty of any government, what makes a democracy different?

What does democracy mean?



IRVING YOSKOWITZ—A senior at Bronx High School of Science, New York City, Irving Yoskowitz will be 17 next November 30. Ranking high in scholarship, he is president of Forum, the student current events club. He is also president of the Latin Club, and a member of Arista Honor Society. Irving is not only associate editor of the school literary magazine, but won Honorable Mention in the National Science Talent Search. Recently he represented his school at the Columbia University Conference on Democracy.

Every country assures us that only theirs is the bastion of freedom. Can we measure relative democracy in nations?

What are the characteristics by which we recognize democracy? Whether the economic system is American brand capitalism, as my friend, Dante Germino of North Carolina, thinks it must be, or English style socialism, the political structure, division of powers,

or cabinet responsible to a Parliament, is not the test.

Can the people change the laws which regulate them? That is the basic question.

In the United States of America, such boundaries are defined not by you alone, not by me alone, but by all the citizens, in thoughtful and deliberate action. So, one of the rights—perhaps *the* right—which must reside with the citizenry of a democracy is the right, by orderly means, to change—not merely the changing of a political party at election time, but the right basically to change, fundamentally to change. It is the democracy which goes to you, which goes to me, to find out how to change.

(Applause.)

We can see even in our own Government traces of that inherent tendency to a static, hesitating attitude. The Electoral College, antiquated and awkward, remains, clumsily colliding with efficiency at every election.

But America is a democracy, and, so, essentially dynamic. It changes as the needs of the people change. Roger Kvam would emphasize this duty of our Government, for the official position, for instance, on labor-management relations, on monopoly, is constantly being modified and altered.

Our people change and our Government, as a projection of the people—as a projection of you and me—also changes. This is the measure of our democracy. (Applause.)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Irving Yoskowitz. This wouldn't really be a democratic program, however, unless we had some differences of opinion. Our next speaker is equally outstanding in his student activities in Durham, North Carolina, High School, where he stands fourth in his class, and is president of his senior class. His greatest interest, so far, appears to be in government, so it's not surprising that we find him a winner on tonight's Junior Town Meeting. So welcome to Town Hall, Dante Germino of Durham, North Carolina. Dante. (Applause.)

Dante Germino:

What does democracy really mean? We Americans should know the answer to that question, for we have seen democracy forge an economic system that has enabled us to become the world's greatest Nation.

Democracy, however, means more to us than a political force. It means, among other things, the right to hold and express our own opinions; the privilege of worshipping in whatever manner we desire; the right to work wherever we wish; and to begin an enterprise, and to profit from it. In other words, democracy means to us complete freedom of thought and action, within, of course, our laws for human health, safety, and justice.

This freedom of the individual is, to me, the summation of our



DANTE GERMINO—A senior at Durham High School, Durham, North Carolina. Dante Germino will be 17 on June 1, 1949. Along with a scholastic record which places him in the upper 10 per cent of his class, he has an active record that includes: school newspaper staff, president of the senior class, student director of the school band, member of the golf team, and delegate to Boys' State of North Carolina.

topic. It is for this reason that the subject is so important, for, since democracy means freedom of the individual, so the strength and effectiveness of democracy depends upon the individual citizen.

It is my belief that our democracy is linked directly with the preservation of our economic system, for the American system of free enterprise insures this freedom of the individual.

Irving declares that it is necessary to preserve private

terprise in order to safeguard individual liberty and insists on the right to change the Government.

How would you change it, Irving? Would you tear down the whole house because of some leaks in the roof? Aren't you really supporting socialism?

I say that we will lose our freedom if we allow it to be replaced by a controlled and regimented economy.

All of us know that our system has serious faults, for no humanly devised one can ever achieve true perfection. It is our duty to strive to correct these faults, in order to successfully combat those forces opposed to our way of life.

The answer to all these problems must come in the long run from the individual. We, the citizens, must take a renewed and positive interest in the affairs of our Government. We can and must consider the issues at stake, study the qualifications of each candidate for office, listen to good discussion programs, and participate in labor-management conferences, civic affairs, and trade groups which stress coöperation and tolerance. All of these things will add up to make us intelligent and useful citizens.

Now, how can individual interests in government best be stimulated?

What practical things can we do to encourage it?

Education, in its various forms, is, to me, the answer. Such projects as model legislatures, which en-

able students to obtain first-hand information through actual participation should be expanded to cover more students.

The publishing and effective distribution of good understandable books and pamphlets about our Government will aid greatly in bridging the gap between Government and the people.

The schools can play an important role through the correlation of the political science courses in each state so that they will have some unity of purpose. I firmly believe that political science should be a required course in all schools. (*Applause.*)

Finally, let me again state that in our democracy, all responsibility rests ultimately with the people, and the government that serves them is only as good as the people make it. Thank you. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Dante Germino. And that is advice from a 17-year-old high-school senior. Let's take it seriously.

Now we are going to hear from a very attractive young lady who has done a great deal of thinking on this question, who is vice-president of the Bridgeton, New Jersey Junior Town Meeting. Judy Krueger has been active and outstanding in so many student activities that it is hard to see how she managed to keep in the upper fourth of her class, but she did. But Judy, you had to win out over

some very stiff competition to get where you are tonight, so we are very eager to hear your views on this question. Judy Krueger of Bridgeton High School, Bridgeton, New Jersey, what do you think democracy really means? (Applause.)

Judy Krueger:

Dante, I cannot agree with you that private enterprise and democracy are synonymous. On the contrary, I feel that democracy gives us the incentive to grow, even in the field of economics.

To us as Americans it presents a constant challenge to advance. The interplay of ideas, among the various racial and religious groups comprising our country, challenges complacency.

Democracy is, I believe, and I think my fellow speakers will agree, the development of the individual made possible by freedom of thought.

There is no progress where we, as individuals, are not free. But democracy does not mean the productivity of one group of individuals, or progress within one country. It should and must be as universal as the love of freedom and the desire for peace.

To you and me, who hope for peace, the support of democracy internationally is of vital importance, for we must not set limits on intellect. More important than boundaries or national patriotism is the preservation of the ideal of democracy. It is the only way to



JUDY KRUEGER—Judy Krueger, who was 17 last November 10, is a senior at Bridgeton High School, Bridgeton, New Jersey. A member of the National Honor Society, she is on the student council and the school newspaper staff, and has distinguished herself as an artist. Judy has had experience in Junior Town Meetings, has been a panel member or an interrogator on several occasions, and served as vice president of Bridgeton's Junior Town Meeting.

international coöperation, understanding, and peace.

Yet America, the great proponent of democracy, has done much to destroy it by pursuing a foreign policy consisting only in its regard of the people concerned.

In my opinion, the cold war has revealed itself not as an endeavor to deal justly, but as a fight to preserve the kind of capitalism that Dante is arguing for tonight.

When we wavered in Palesti

was it because we wished a more democratic government for the Arabs, or because we wanted to help our friend, Great Britain, keep the support of the feudal Arab rulers and thus have cheap labor and cheap oil? What was the issue there—justice or economics? We have dealt with dictators in Spain and the Argentine. We let the Dutch break the back of the U. N. in Indonesia. We supported a dictator in a graft-marked government of the worst sort in China. We have sent guns to hungry people instead of food.

Mr. Allen, can you call this democracy? (*Applause.*)

If it is the Communists we fear, we must remember that we cannot destroy an idea by guns and bombs and killing. Neither can we spread democracy at the point of a sword. (*Applause.*)

We must strive to make our way of life so perfect that other nations will eagerly follow us. If we can do this, we will do much to defeat communism. Perhaps when the fear of war is removed, even Russia can be persuaded to liberalize and adopt more democratic measures. But by its very nature, democracy must be accepted willingly.

International acceptance of democracy and the intellectual freedom of the individual should be our goal as Americans, for only when all people everywhere are free to mature and develop to the utmost of their capacities will we have true democracy here.

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Judy Krueger. I couldn't help thinking though, Judy, no matter what our shortcomings in democracy may be, it is certainly democratic when a young high school junior or senior can sit on the platform with the Assistant Secretary of State and ask him a question like that. (*Applause.*)

We have been presenting our Junior Town Meetings for the past eight years, and I don't know when we've had four students who have been so outstanding in both scholarship and student activities. Roger Kvam from Stewartville, Minnesota, High School has always ranked first in his class. He's an outstanding athlete, having earned his letter in football, and last year he won first place in the *Minneapolis Star's* program of Information on World Affairs which got him a trip to New York, Boston, and Washington.

Well, Roger, you've heard the views of your three colleagues now, and before we hear the Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. George Allen, what do you think democracy really means? Roger Kvam. (*Applause.*)

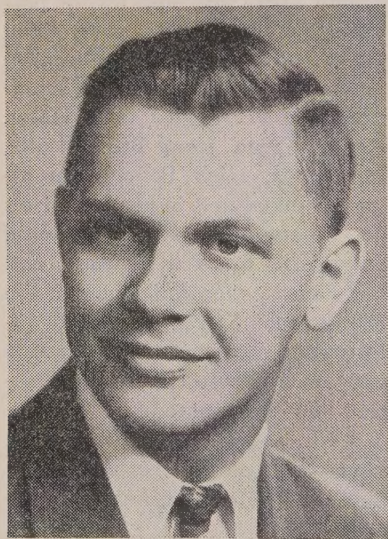
Roger Kvam:

It is evident, we all agree, that democracy is the individual. However, it seems that Irving and Judy believe that the Government should be more paternalistic toward them than Dante and I. Our main cleavage of opinion, however,

is over democracy's extent, particularly in insuring freedom from want in individual lives.

How far does democracy extend into the lives of individuals?

Well, friends, we daily hear of the increase of the crime wave, juvenile delinquency, atrocities committed by maladjusted persons, the rising divorce rate. In short, a galaxy of evils which con-



ROGER KVAM—On February 21, Roger Kvam celebrated his 18th birthday. At Stewartville High School, Stewartville, Minnesota, he topped his class in scholarship, and also won a letter in football. He has had success in extemporaneous speech contests, and won one contest which made him a guest observer on a "Quiz Kids" program last June. He is a member of the student council, the boys' glee club, and the mixed chorus. At present, Roger is editor of the school paper, and last fall was a delegate to the Governor's Conference on Youth.

cern the democracy seriously because its sole reason for existence is the betterment of its people.

These evils are the result of our rapid growth from the pit of social backwardness to the apex in world prosperity. They are not growing pains, but rather cancers of middle age which must be cured if long life is to be enjoyed.

Free enterprise is an ideal system although it has faults as well as other. In order to check and eliminate those faults—and I might say that you don't scrap a car because of a dented fender, as Irving sees to believe—it is imperative that we realize that individual democracy is the basis of national democracy for democracy is you and me with our inherent dignity.

Now what is causing crime, divorce, lack of morals, and juvenile delinquency? It is my conviction that they are caused by lack of democracy. It is a well accepted fact among sociologists that lack of home, health, education, recreation, and other securities breeds our criminals. Our present housing ills, poor health and education standards, and paucity of legitimate fun, therefore cause our trouble.

Now, Mr. Denny, I can answer that question, "What does democracy really mean?"

Democracy, to me, is the system of human government which places supreme confidence in the individual. It makes possible for him the best in life. It creates opportunities for him to exert

rest qualities, and it goes all the way in his benefit.

The reason for the aforementioned ills in our society is the lack of democracy's extension into every phase of life. As Alfred E. Smith put it, "All the ills of democracy can be cured by more democracy."

And so I sincerely believe that programs for adequate health standards, equal educational opportunities, sufficient housing, youth guidance centers with recreation, marriage counselors, and community discussion clubs would provide the tools with which we could eliminate the maladjustments of individuals, thereby controlling crime and this alarming immorality.

Many say this is socialism—just another way of letting the Government support the people. Fellow Americans, it is not. I want to help these people *live*, not *exist*. It is a long-term investment in that I would prevent evil by eliminating its causes, and I would prevent socialism by placing checks, balances, and specific limitations on the administration of this program.

This is real democracy in action, and is the only democracy that can survive. For today, as civilization totters near the abyss of destruction, it is because of emphasis on material things.

Our mechanical progress is a thousand years ahead of our cultural application. This cultural lag makes social progress imperative if democracy is to meet that test.

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Roger Kvam. As is our custom on these Junior Town Meetings, we invite one adult especially qualified on the subject of the evening. We felt this year that you would be most interested in the views of a man whose task it is to interpret American democracy to the rest of the world through the "Voice of America" and other agencies of the Public Affairs Division of our State Department. So we have the honor to present the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, a native of Durham, North Carolina, a graduate of Duke University, a post-graduate of Harvard, who has been in the department service for the past 20 years, Mr. George V. Allen. Mr. Allen. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Allen:

The four of you students have just given an outstanding example of what democracy really means in a more striking way, perhaps, than you intended. Democracy is easier to practice than to define, and you've been practicing it, during the last fifteen minutes, by speaking your minds freely.

When Demosthenes spoke to the crowds in Athens, he was fortunate if a few thousand people in the Forum could hear his voice. You have spoken tonight to millions of listeners throughout the United States, and tomorrow your voices will be relayed by the "Voice of America" to all parts of the world.

But the essentials of democracy were the same in Demosthenes' day as they are now. Under democracy, a man must be free, without fear of a concentration camp, to speak in favor of the government or against it. If this simple privilege doesn't exist, then there is no democracy.

In your speeches tonight, you exercised the democratic privilege of criticizing a number of things in our Government and our society.

Irving Yoskowitz emphasizes



GEORGE V. ALLEN—Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, Mr. George V. Allen supervises the work of the State Department's research and information programs, including the "Voice of America" broadcasts to foreign nations. Mr. Allen has been in the Foreign Service since 1930. He advanced from his first post of Vice Consul at Kingston, Jamaica, to that of Ambassador to Iran. He has been stationed in Washington since January, 1948.

that the basic test of democracy is not whether the economic structure of a country is socialistic or capitalistic, but whether the people are free to change the laws. I think that Britain may be as democratic as the United States, for example, although Britain produces coal through the government ownership of coal mines while in the United States, coal mines are privately owned.

My fellow townsman from Durham, Dante Germino, thinks, on the other hand, that our democracy must be linked with our economic system. He feels that, if we are to preserve individual liberties, we must also preserve the free enterprise system, or otherwise we lose both of them.

Judy Krueger pointed out several instances in which she felt the democratic principles have not been followed in our foreign policy. She thinks the United States Government may have wavered in its support of the Palestine cause due to our support of feudal Arab leaders who provide us with cheap land, cheap labor, and cheap oil. She says we've supported dictators in the Argentine, Spain, and China, and imperialism in Indonesia.

From Roger Kvam's remarks, I judge that he measures the country's democracy in part by the extent to which its own citizens are assured through private enterprise against freedom from want.

He feels that the United States cannot claim to be fully a democracy.

racy in this respect. He challenges private enterprise to make it possible for all of our citizens to have medical attention, full educational, health, and recreation facilities, housing, etc.

You have heard four different points of view expressed. Each will have its strong supporters in this audience and throughout the world.

However, there's one important thing in common about each of these excellent presentations. All agree that under democracy, the individual must be free to think and say what he pleases, to follow whatever religious teachings he chooses, and above all, to control the government and not be controlled by it.

These are essentials to any definition of democracy.

Many different systems of government have been tried during recorded history. All of them, except democracy, have been based on the rule either of one man, often a king, or a few individuals who held the authority of a king. But no matter what assurances have been given that the few would rule in the interests of the many, sooner or later the few, as human beings, have used their authority in their own selfish interests.

The only safe king is "King People." Democracy is the only system under which the people are king.

The world today is the scene of the most gigantic struggle of ideas that history has ever known. The

contending forces are the totalitarian police state and democracy. If the totalitarian methods of Nazi Germany or those of present-day Moscow triumph, individual human beings all over the world will lose their liberties.

Wherever democracy prevails, the people will continue to rule. In a contest of this kind, every individual human being in the world has an equal stake in the outcome. There can be no neutrals, no one sitting on the sideline, indifferent as to the results. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, George Allen. Now at this point we have our discussion around the microphone before we take the questions from the audience. Let's have all you young people up here with the Secretary and start our discussion period.

Now, Irving, we haven't heard from you for a while and your name's been mentioned several times. Who are you going to take a crack at first?

Irving Yoskowitz: Well, first I'd like to try Dante. Instead of first asking a question, I'd like to answer one. He asked me a question. He asked me if I was a socialist. Well, that's one of those ambiguous questions. If, by socialism, he means nationalization of the basic industries and services which are vital to national welfare, so as to provide actual economic democracy, my answer is "yes." (*Ap-*

plause.) But if he means the kind of dictatorship and suppression of all freedom we find in some countries of the world today, the answer is "no." (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: All right, thank you. Now, what's your question for him?

Irving Yoskowitz: Well, that finishes Dante. I'd like to take a crack at Roger now. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Denny: All right. Fire away at Roger.

Irving Yoskowitz: Roger, in your speech you said that my arguments seem to you like scrapping a car because it had a dented fender. Well, there's something there I don't understand. I wish you'd clarify it for me. I use another metaphor and you tell me if that isn't really better. Don't you think that instead of a car with a dented fender, your program is rather like bejewelling and gilding the bumper which is to receive all the hard knocks?

Mr. Denny: All right. Now you toss those metaphors around a little bit, Roger Kvam. (*Applause.*)

Roger Kvam: He asked me if I didn't think that I was bejewelling a bumper on a car. I'm not. In the first place, I'd like to say that it seems that Irving wants to replace this system of ours because it has not succeeded in some of its aspects. But it is foolish to discard a car when you just have a dent in one of its fenders. Indeed, the thing to do is to get rid of that dent and go on to greater achievement.

Now, if Irving can show me one example of socialism working out, which he says he believes—and I don't mean Russian socialism or communism; I mean pure socialism as he is talking about it tonight—then he might have some support and adherence in me. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Do you want to answer that, Irving?

Irving Yoskowitz: The first part of that question about the bumper: Roger, why do you choose a bumper which is wholly indispensable? Isn't it the motor?

In the second part, which was the real question, he wants an example of socialism actually working out, and by working out, I suppose he means nationalization of industries and the preservation of freedom. Well, there's only one country, one large major country in the world, which is socialist and which has a long democratic tradition behind it, and that's England. No one's going to dispute the fact that England is democratic and also is beginning its complete socialist experiment, Roger. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: All right. Thank you. Now let's hear from Judy here.

Judy Krueger: Dante, you say the American system of free enterprise insures the freedom of the individual. Certainly you don't mean freedom of speech, for the small businessman must, at least pay lip service to the political views of his community or lose his

customers; certainly not religious freedom for in many places it does not pay financially to be a Catholic or a Jew; and certainly not freedom from fear if it destroys these two. Can you tell me what freedom private enterprise guarantees that socialism could not guarantee also? (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: The \$64 question, Dante.

Dante Germino: Well, Judy, I recognize that there are many weaknesses in our system, but I am a little dubious, in fact I am very dubious, of accepting complete government control, or partial government control, of industry as an example. I believe the reform must come from the individual, and it only can come from the individual through education, and not through acquisition of basic industries as Irving and you would advocate. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Judy, do you have another comment there?

Judy Krueger: You say you don't want government intervention. How are you going to get an equalized educational system throughout the country and a slum clearance program that will work without government help? (*Applause.*)

Dante Germino: Well, I believe firmly in federal aid to education if it is administered to the states with no strings attached. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Irving, do you want to comment?

Irving Yoskowitz: Well, Dante, I think that your colleague Roger said something about just how we're going to remedy these evils, but it seems to—well, I guess this is a question to Roger. It seems to me that he realizes the evils that our economic system has produced, and he wants to remove those evils which will only allow these same evils to be produced by the same system again.

Mr. Denny: Roger, now it's your turn to comment.

Roger Kvam: I challenged my colleague, Mr. Yoskowitz, to produce an example to you which would adequately portray the success of socialism. He gave as an example England, which started socialization of their major industries six months ago. Do you mean to tell me that that is a finished experiment in socialism and those people still are going to maintain liberty and that socialism is not going to project further?

Mr. Denny: Well, Irving, I'm afraid he didn't answer the question you asked him, but he did comment on one you threw at him a while ago.

Irving Yoskowitz: I gave England as a sample because I think that Roger would be most satisfied with an example of a very large and important country. If he wants an example of complete socialization, I recommend him to study Sweden, or the various Scandinavian countries which have gone socialistic.

Mr. Denny: All right, now it's

almost time for us to take these questions from the audience. We have a great many young people here in the audience who want to ask questions of the Secretary and the young people here, but I think Mr. Allen might have a comment by way of summary before we take those questions. Mr. Allen?

Mr. Allen: I think this is a very exciting argument between the students, and very cleverly done. One thing that they, perhaps, overlook, it seems to me, is one point which was made by one of the speakers himself: that the essential question is not whether England under socialism can be a democracy or whether the United States under private enterprise is a democracy. The essential question is whether the people have a right to change the laws. They can try government ownership of mines in England. If they like it, if they can make a better mousetrap, the world will undoubtedly make a path to their door. But England will not be a democracy if people are no longer able to get on the soap box and say either that they support government ownership of mines or that they disagree with government ownership of mines. That's the essential thing that I think we must all remember. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Now before we turn to those questions from our listeners in our audience here, I think our listeners will be interested in the following message.

Announcer: From historic Town Hall in New York City, we are presenting the 553d broadcast of America's Town Meeting of the Air. You may obtain a copy of the Town Meeting Bulletin containing a complete transcript of this program by writing to Town Hall and sending ten cents to Box 56, New York 46, N. Y. Please do not send stamps. Allow about two weeks for delivery.

On a subscription basis, the Town Meeting Bulletin is \$4.50 per year; \$2.35 for six months; or you may subscribe for eleven issues for one dollar.

When you send for your copy of tonight's discussion, you can have *your* name placed on the Round-the-World Town Meeting scroll by enclosing one dollar or more to help take Town Meeting around the world this summer. The scroll, with your name and the name of your city or town, will be presented to the mayor of each of the 14 foreign capitals from which your Town Meeting will broadcast during July, August and September. For every dollar you send, you may add another name.

On this people-to-people basis we shall demonstrate to 14 different countries how Town Meeting can help foster peace and understanding throughout the world—and your dollars will give you a personal share in it. Send in yours tonight!

Now for our question period here again is Mr. Denny.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Denny: In our audience to-night are representatives of nearly every high school in Greater New York. As our special guests this evening, we have 75 high school students from Birmingham, Alabama, who participate in the Junior Town Meeting conducted each Tuesday night over Station WSGN, our ABC affiliate in Birmingham. Yes, and there are lots of adults here, too. We're going to start with a question from one of our alternates here in New York, Al Lerner, from Forest Hills. Isn't that right?

Mr. Lerner: No, School of Industrial Arts.

Mr. Denny: Oh, School of Industrial Arts. Thank you, very much. Who is your question for?

Mr. Lerner: My question is addressed to Dante Germino. Dante speaks about America's great heritage—free enterprise and the freedom of the individual—which I also believe in. But I'm sorry to say that many times that's been used to stop social legislation. I'd like to ask Dan if Congress, as stipulated in the Democratic party platform, sponsors such bills as public housing and health insurance, would he consider that an invasion of individual freedom and private enterprise?

Dante Germino: Not to the extent that it does not completely go into a socialistic program. I believe in a moderate program. I am not a reactionary. I am a moderate

liberal. I believe that there are certain weaknesses in our system. And I believe that the only way to preserve it is to remedy it in its bad spots, and I certainly would support public housing, aid to education, minimum wages, and some of the other programs in the Democratic platform.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now the lady on the second row here.

Lady: My question is for Judy Krueger. Judy, do you consider the North Atlantic Defense Pact undemocratic, and, if you do, what alternative would you propose?

Judy Krueger: I don't think it's undemocratic, but I don't see where it does any good. I would propose strengthening the U. N. into an effective organization.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Roger has a comment on that.

Roger Kvam: I'd like to find out from Judy and from anyone else here who'd know the answer—I'm sure we'd all be glad to find out—what she plans to do and proposes to do to strengthen the United Nations. (*Applause.*)

Judy Krueger: First of all, eliminate the veto and give the U. N. power of enforcement. If Russia is not willing to go along with this, we should get the other nations of the world to form a united organization and leave a seat for any nation, such as Russia, that will not join at first and make it known that they are welcome to join any time they wish. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Good answer, Judy. The young man on the third row here.

Man: I'm Bernard Block of Birmingham's Junior Town Meeting. I would like to direct my question to Roger Kvam. Do you consider the Electoral College a truly democratic institution?

Roger Kvam: No, I do not consider the Electoral College a truly democratic institution. But the thing is, I didn't say anything like that in my speech. However, I'd like to say that I do favor abolishment of that College—rather, excuse me, not abolishment, but a proportional voting representation in our national elections. (Applause.)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Is this another young lady from Birmingham?

Lady: Yes, and I would like to address my question to Irving. Irving, what are some of the reasons why democracy has failed in some countries?

Irving Yoskowitz: Democracy has failed in some countries of the world because the people were not alert. The people of any nation must be alert and on guard to safeguard their liberties. In addition, there are unscrupulous men all over the world who, whenever they find any sort of loophole or any sort of keyhole through which they can squeeze, will take over a country. The United States, along with some other countries in the world, is blessed with a population which realizes its liberty,

and, therefore, has very little danger of losing it.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now here is another one of our alternates from New York—Joseph Macaluso. Yes, sir?

Mr. Macaluso: Well, I'd like to ask Assistant Secretary Allen just what he thinks the North Atlantic Pact will do to foster international democracy.

Mr. Denny: Secretary Allen. What will the Atlantic Pact do to foster international democracy?

Mr. Allen: The North Atlantic Pact is designed, and I feel confident that it will succeed in giving a sense of security to the nations which belong to it, also to other nations who might fear that wars might start in that area so that through that sense of security they will be able to carry out their own lives in their own countries without fears from the outside which might tend to break down democracy inside.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Another little Alabama girl here.

Lady: My name is Margaret Ann Phillips, and I'd like to address my question to Judy Krueger. Do you think that it would be undemocratic to outlaw the filibuster in Congress?

Mr. Denny: Would it be undemocratic to outlaw the filibuster in Congress, Judy?

Judy Krueger: The Senate has means to stop the filibuster and they haven't used it. I think it would be more democratic if the Senators would use the power

that they have. I don't think it's undemocratic to stop the filibuster because it has stopped the passage of democratic legislation and it's completely outmoded.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Irving has a comment on that.

Irving Yoskowitz: Truly, our democracy implies the protection of the minority, but the protection of the minority does not imply the right of the minority to obstruct the will of the majority. Therefore, I would support abolishment of the filibuster. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman here.

Man: Mr. Yoskowitz, I'd like to ask you: In democratic change in weighing arguments about socializing medical care and extending unemployment insurance, where must we draw the line between individual liberty and security?

Irving Yoskowitz: Individual liberty will extend to that point where the individual is perfectly free to realize his capabilities and to that extent that he does not endanger the welfare of other members of the population of his country.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Dante, did you have a comment on that a moment ago? Didn't mean to rule you out.

Dante Germino: In referring to the filibuster, I would like to say that without a doubt the majority of the people of the South think that it was a horrible thing and do not approve of blocking a com-

plete legislative program through unscrupulous means. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now the young lady on the other aisle.

Lady: My question is addressed to No. 2.

Mr. Denny: That's Dante, I think. That's not a hard name to remember.

Lady: What do you consider a citizen in the South? You have suggested that our system should include political science in its education. But don't you think that in order to preserve the individual rights of Negroes and impoverished whites, we should educate them morally instead of politically? (*Applause.*)

Dante Germino: You are partially right. I believe we should do both. In reference to the Negro question, as I know it will come up, and the FEPC law, I would like to state that I am against the FEPC law, but I am for *doing something*. I believe that an FEPC law would create more antagonism because it is attempting to solve an idea with force and that the majority of the people in the South would oppose it. Instead, I would suggest a program of: First, slum clearance; second, better educational systems; and third, improved recreational facilities to improve the relations between the races through social forces; in other words, improving the environment, and therefore increasing the respect between them. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: I thank you, Dante.

The young lady on the aisle here.

Lady: I'd like to ask Mr. Allen: What will the Government do to rid us of the slums which are—

Mr. Denny: Which are probably undemocratic, is what you were going to say, is that right? All right, she nods her head. What is the Government going to do to help rid us of slums which are certainly undemocratic?

Mr. Allen: That question goes at the heart of the discussion between the students here tonight: Whether you can have a democracy and have socialism at the same time, or whether you must have democracy and the free enterprise system at the same time—if you mean government housing to rid all the slums.

I, myself, may say right now that I think as long as you have entire freedom of speech, freedom of discussion, freedom to criticize, that it's entirely possible to have a housing system under which the Government would undertake very far measures in providing riddance of the slums. As long as everybody has a free chance to say whether he believes in it or not, and if the majority rules, then the housing can be done under democracy perfectly well. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. I believe that question was really directed to Roger, because he's the one who tackled the question of housing. Roger Kvam, let's see what you have to say on that question.

Roger Kvam: Now, we all know that slum clearance does not educate or bring up citizens for democracy. It robs them of all their education, of maturity, and of every trait which goes up to make a finished citizen. So democracy in order to realize that tremendous potential which it has in every citizen, has to provide housing, but in a manner in which free enterprise would not be infringed. That can be done. It can be done through intelligent administration of a program designed to give housing. If that administration is handled wisely, we'll not have the beast of socialism creeping on and grabbing other departments of our Government. (*Applause*)

Mr. Denny: Now I thought you'd get Irving to his feet. Come on, Irving, here you are.

Irving Yoskowitz: Roger, you're going to begin a system of public housing, meanwhile retaining our system of private enterprise, I, for one, would hate to be around to hear the noise that would rise from the building industry.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Thank you, young man on the aisle.

Man: I come from Christopher Columbus High School and I like to ask a question of Mr. Kvam. Is it possible for the United States to have political freedom without economic freedom?

Roger Kvam: No, I don't believe so, because of the simple fact that if you are in economic straits you cannot be a political free man.

the sense that you are not able to be free, politically, and to think freely. (Applause.)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. This young man right here in the front row.

Man: I address my question to Dante Germino. Would you say that no strings attached to federal education means segregation in schools? Is that really democracy? How can you speak of democracy when you come from a poll-tax state that is also a segregated state. (Laughter.) Also, Mr. Denny, where are Negroes on your staff, except for doormen?

Mr. Denny: I can answer that question, sir. Then, we'll let Dante answer his because you seem to feel that very deeply. We do happen to have a Negro on our staff—we have two. They're two of our best office workers; one of them a switchboard operator, and the other one is in our office staff as a secretary, and they're doing very well, thank you. (Applause.)

Now, Dante, I think you and I as Tarheels ought to resent that remark about a poll-tax state because North Carolina is not a poll-tax state.

Dante Germino: That's what I was going to say. You are quite wrong in that because in North Carolina we do not have a poll tax as a prerequisite for voting. Almost every state has a poll tax. Only in seven, I believe, is the poll tax a prerequisite for voting.

As far as your referring to not giving federal aid to segregated

school systems, that cannot be done at the present time because the South has built up a tradition over hundreds of years and it can be broken down only by gradual reëducation. You cannot do it—it would never work—in one complete sweep. We must work gradually towards that end. A social tradition cannot be broken down by a law. That is fundamentally wrong, in my opinion. (Applause.)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. I have just a little bit of information for the young man who asked the question about Town Hall. We have a very distinguished Negro on our Board of Trustees, and if you noticed, one Negro asked a question here tonight, and I have another Negro standing in the aisle. We'll take her question right now. Nearly every Town Meeting, we have one, two, or three Negroes asking questions. Thank you. (Applause.)

Lady: My question is addressed to Roger Kvam. Does he think that private enterprise can be trusted to produce for the benefit of people? Whether they should be trusted to use all their efforts for social reform?

Mr. Denny: Can we trust private enterprise to fulfill its social responsibility? Is that what you mean?

Roger Kvam: Well, I'd say to your question that private enterprise must. If they do not, their system fails and is gone, and we don't want to have that happen.

Mr. Denny: All right. Thank

you, very much, Roger. Now while our speakers prepare their summaries of tonight's discussion, here's a special message of interest to you.

Announcer: Now that you have heard the opinions of tonight's speakers, what do you think? Most of us know what it means to fight a war to preserve democracy, but how can we, the citizens of the world's most powerful democracy today, lead the world into the path of peace with individual freedom and well-being?

This is to be the over-all subject of your Round the World Town Meeting from England, France, Germany, Italy, Palestine, Egypt, Pakistan, India, China, and Japan. We'll bring you the voices and questions of the people of these countries who are also asking for peace.

What about Eastern Europe? Yes, we have asked permission to go there and we hope to bring you news about that next week.

It is important that we keep this on a people-to-people basis; that we go in your name. We can do this only if you will send your dollars for democracy to Town Hall, Box 56, New York 46. N. Y. Mr. Denny and his staff know that you are behind them in this great adventure in democracy. That address again—Box 56, New York 46, N. Y.

Now for the summaries, here again is Mr. Denny.

Mr. Denny: In place of our summaries tonight, we have the pre-

sentation of awards to our Junior Town Meeting winners. It's my pleasure now to introduce Robert Kennedy, Executive Secretary of the Junior Town Meeting League. Mr. Kennedy. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Kennedy: Thank you, Mr. Denny. This is the seventh year in which *Our Times* has conducted the talent quest for this annual broadcast. In that time, the Junior Town Meeting has become an accepted technique in the classrooms, assemblies, and on the air throughout the Nation and even across the Atlantic.

The serious study of current problems by young people was one of the goals of a man who is known as the father of current events teaching in America—Charles Palmer Davis. Mr. Davis founded the American Education Press which publishes *Our Times*. His pioneer work has been commemorated in a beautiful medal. This medal is awarded to students whose excellence in the study of current events identifies them as the most promising citizens of tomorrow.

Mr. Preston Davis, the son of the founder, has asked me to serve as his representative in awarding Charles Palmer Davis medals to each of the students appearing in this program. I'm sure you will all agree that they deserve these awards. (*Applause.*) I am happy to say also that each of you will receive a 1949 edition of the famous 19-volume, 10,000 page *World Book Encyclopedia*, pu-

lished by the Educational Division of Field Enterprises, Inc.

Mr. Denny, it appears that this is award night on Town Meeting. May I present Miss Doris McFerran, editor of *Radio Mirror* magazine. (Applause.)

Miss McFerran: Mr. Denny, I've come to bring you the *Radio Mirror* award. It is chosen each year by the people who listen to radio. It is not *Radio Mirror* magazine's award, but it is the listeners' award. America's Town Meeting has been chosen as the American radio listeners' favorite program for education. (Applause.)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, very much, Miss McFerran. I am happy to accept the *Radio Mirror* award on behalf of my associates here in Town Hall, and the American Broadcasting Company, and I want to express deep appreciation from all of us to the radio lis-

teners who have given us this honor.

Now, next week, we begin our annual spring tour in Louisville, Kentucky, where our subject will be one which you, the listeners, have selected — "Is Modern Woman Failing Her Responsibilities?" (Applause and laughter.) Our speakers will be Faye Emerson Roosevelt, star of stage and screen; Mrs. Joseph Purcell, housewife of Wakefield, Massachusetts; David L. Cohn, foreign correspondent and author; and Harrison Smith, president and associate editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. Now, for your copy of tonight's discussion, just send 10 cents to Town Hall, Box 56, New York 46, New York. Please do not send stamps and allow at least two weeks for delivery. So plan to be with us next Tuesday and every Tuesday at the sound of the crier's bell. (Applause.)

Concerning Town Hall

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MUSIC—More musical events are held annually in Town Hall than in any other concert hall in the world. Such musical greats as Lotte Lehmann, Yehudi and Hepzibah Menuhin, Maria Anderson, Aksel Schiotz, and Nelson Eddy have made their American recital debuts here. When planning a trip to New York, write for the monthly Calendar of Events.



LECTURES—Town Hall's world-famous Morning Lectures are now in their 55th season, run from November through April. Leaders of thought and opinion are heard Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays at 11. Although sold by subscription months in advance, a few single admissions are almost always available.

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